(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to increase the trips to Virar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) 2 pair of Virar bound local trains (EMU) have been increased w.e.f. 1.10.96.

(b) Operational and resources constraints.

(c) Additional trips to Virar have not been found feasible. However, the number of 12-car services to/from Virar have been increased by 60 during 1996-97.

Connection of entire Calcutta by Rail

261. SHRI SUBRATA MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that till now Calcutta is not connected with several places of the country by rail;

(b) if so, the steps to be taken to connect the places like Rajkot, Ghandhidham, Dwarka, Goa, Jaisalmer, Kanyakumari, Bikaner with Calcutta by direct rail services; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir. Calcutta is well connected by rail.

(b) and (c). Howrah is already connected with Bikaner, Rajkot, Ghandhidham by direct trains/through coaches. Introduction of new trains from Howrah to Dwarka, Goa, Jaisalmer, Kannyakumari has not been found feasible due to operational and resource constraints.

Construction of Over Bridge at Railway Crossing

262. SHRI K.P. NAIDU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the gate of railway crossing at Palam Colony, New Delhi generally remains closed due to the gauge conversion work undertaken recently as many trains now pass through the track;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to construct an over bridge for the smooth flow of road transport over the said railway crossing; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d). Normally the level crossing is kept open to road traffic. Number of closures of level crossing has reduced as number of trains after gauge conversion has reduced.

A proposal of Delhi Development Authority to replace the level crossing by a Road over bridge is under planning as the Delhi Development Authority has not yet completed the requisite preliminaries.

Railway Network

263. SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the target growth of railway network in the country during the Eighth Five Year Plan period;

(b) whether it is a fact that the achievement was far below the target;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to increase the achievement rate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) The Achievements expected by the end of year 1996-97 under various plan heads, as compared to the targets fixed for the VIII five year plan, are as under :

	Plan Head	Target for VIII Plan	Achievement Expected
1.	Rolling Stock (Number)		
	(i) Locus	1499	1517
	(ii) Coaches	9100	9136
	(iii) EMUs	1265	1288
	(iv) Wagons	120000/99509*	97303+5000 wagons under OYWS in 1996-97
2.	Track Renewals (Kms)	12500	13972
3.	Gauge Conversion (Kms)	6000/8100*	7033
4.	Electrification (Kms)	3000/2700*	2700
5.	Doubling (Kms)	1250	1088
6.	New Lines (kms)	No Targets	714

(* Revised Targets)

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d). Does not arise.

[Translation]

Amount Allocated to Maharashtra for Promotion of Tourism

264. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the schematic amount allocated during the

current financial year for the promotion of tourism in Maharashtra;

(b) whether the tourism industry in Maharashtra has registered a large scale progress during the last two years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the number of foreign tourists who visited the different tourist places in Maharashtra during the last year?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) The Department of Tourism in consultation with the State Government officials of Maharashtra have identified 6 projects at an estimated cost of Rs.196 lakhs for Central Financial Assistance. These projects are :-

(1) Aurangabad Holiday Resort, Aurangabad

(2) Pilgrim for Shirdi

(3) Konkani Hits at Harihareshwar and Ganapatipule

(4) Tourist Complex at Kunkeshwar, Tourist Complex-cum-Crafts Centre at Pinguli

(5) Tourist Complex-cum-water sports complex at Lake Dhampur

(b) and (c) To give impetus to the Tourism industry in Maharashtra, the State Government is providing incentives-concessions to encourage Private Investment on a large scale. So far the State Government has received 55 proposals for private investment amounting to Rs.102 crores.

(d) 8,81,351 foreign tourists visited various places in Maharashtra during the year 1995.

Production/Export of Mica

265. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHAUHAN
SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state

(a) the production of mica in the country during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 till date, state-wise;

(b) the percentage of the above production exported during each of the last three years; and

(c) the countries to which it has been exported and the foreign exchange earned therefrom during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) As per the information available, State-wise production of Mica during 1994-995, 1995-96 and April'96 to Aug.'96 is given below :-

(Qty. in Tonnes)

States	1994-95		1995-96		April'96 to August, 96	
	Crude	Waste & Scarp	Crude	Waste & Scarp	Crude	Waste & Scrap
India	1988	1465	1761	1198	815	611
Andhara Pradesh	783	558	756	359	343	215
Bihar	1138	401	956	318	445	202
Rajasthan	67	506	49	521	27	194

(b) Production reported is of Mica (Crude and Waste & Scarp while that of export consist of unmanufactured and worked Mica i.e. Blocks, Splittings, Condenser Films, Waste & Scrap, Plates Cuts, Washers & Discs, Miacanite and other Built up Mica. Apart from these items large quantities of Mica powder are also exported which constitute 80-85% of the total Mica Export.

(c) Mica is being exported mainly to countries like United States of America, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Italy, China, Korea, Singapore, Spain, Hong Kong, Norway, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, etc. The foreign exchange earned during 1994-95, 1995-96 and April;96 to August, 96 has been reported to the tune of Rs.38.7 Crores, Rs.44.0 Crores, and Rs.8.5 Crores respectively.

Growth in Tourism Industry

266. SHRI KACHARU BHAU RAUT : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the current year is witnessing any growth in the tourism industry of the country; and

(b) if so, the percentage of growth achieved so far in comparison to the last year?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) Yes, Sir.